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Department of Justice

Washington

9 April 57

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**MEMORANDUM TO THE HEADS OF ALL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

I have been requested by the Assistant to the President and the Attorney General to assume the chairmanship of the Personnel Security Advisory Committee and to coordinate and assist the heads of the departments and agencies in the operation of the federal personnel security program.

In the near future I shall ask a representative group of experienced security officials to participate as permanent members of this Committee to advise and consult with me with respect to personnel security matters and from time to time other officials may be asked by the Committee to participate in meetings or other activities when their advice or assistance is needed. Effective immediately, Mr. John F. Doherty of the Internal Security Division, Department of Justice, is appointed Vice Chairman of the Personnel Security Advisory Committee with full authority to speak for me in matters relating to the federal personnel security program. In the future, in order to insure proper handling, it is requested that any correspondence relating to personnel security matters be addressed to me as Chairman, Personnel Security Advisory Committee, Room 3525, United States Department of Justice, Washington 25, D. C.

In the event the head of a department or agency so desires, I shall be available for consultation with respect to dispositions to be made in individual cases on questions of suspension and termination under the Act of August 26, 1950. As you know, under the Act, the decision to terminate is the sole responsibility of the head of the department or agency concerned. Such consultation on my part, therefore, can only be in an advisory capacity. However, in order that each case shall receive the fullest possible consideration, it is recommended that consultation not be requested until the head of the department or agency has received the recommendations of security and top legal officers on the need for suspension or termination.

It is respectfully recommended that immediate steps be taken by the heads of the departments or agencies to accomplish the following:

1. Review the designations of all sensitive positions affected with the national security and make such designations a matter of record within the department or agency.

2. Furnish to the Personnel Security Advisory Committee promptly by letter the name of any employee who may now, or at some later date, be suspended in accordance with the provisions of the Act of August 26, 1950, the date of such suspension, a copy of the charges furnished to such employee and the date and final disposition of the case.

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3. Designate and furnish to the Personnel Security Advisory Committee the name of a senior official of the department or agency, preferably not below Assistant Secretary level, with whom the Committee may directly deal in matters of mutual interest involving the personnel security program.

Your attention is once more directed to the Attorney General's letter to the President of March 4, 1955, making certain recommendations regarding the operation of the federal personnel security program. Early interview or inquiry of employees regarding reported unfavorable information is particularly encouraged, since experience has shown that information or explanation developed in this manner greatly assists in prompt and just resolution of the case. Departments and agencies are reminded, too, that in cases in which suspension and issuance of orders are contemplated on the basis of material information furnished by unidentified sources, it would be advisable to determine whether intervening circumstances might now permit such sources to testify and be cross-examined in hearing.

Your prompt consideration of these and other matters which in the future may be referred to you by the Personnel Security Advisory Committee will be greatly appreciated.

*William F. Tompkins*

WILLIAM F. TOMPKINS  
Chairman  
Personnel Security Advisory Committee